

Alumni Columns

SPRING 2017

Northwestern State University Magazine





*Dr. Chris Maggio
1985, 1991
Acting President
Northwestern State
University*

My fellow alumni:

I am deeply honored to serve as acting president for the next few months as we undergo a national search for a permanent replacement for Dr. Jim Henderson. I would like to thank Dr. Henderson for two outstanding years of leadership at NSU. His open communication, transparent governance and focus on the student experience have created positive momentum on campus and in our community. I share his belief that our best days are ahead of us! By working collaboratively, we will maintain a positive environment that fosters excellence for students, faculty and staff.

The search process for NSU's next president is underway and new leadership should be in place by July 1.

One principle that Dr. Henderson stressed was open communication. I plan to continue that practice and welcome the opportunity to share information that impacts our university.

In case you had not heard the good news, Northwestern State's Spring 2017 enrollment was up 540 students above last spring. We attribute this healthy growth to the university's continued focus on recruiting, serving, educating and retaining students. NSU is one of two universities in the state that is honoring the promise to students that they would be awarded a TOPS tuition scholarship if they attained the ACT, GPA and curriculum standards.

Please know that we have a strong ally in Dr. Henderson who will work in his new role with the governor, legislature and others on behalf of NSU and the other UL System schools to search for meaningful solutions to problems that affect higher education. Just as important, we continue to have an opportunity to show that, despite cuts and disinvestment in higher education over the past decade, our university is positioned to excel. It is important that we continue to progress with our strategic vision and remain focused on our goal of becoming the nation's premier regional university.

Thank you for your continued support of me and of Northwestern State University.



*Drake Owens
2004, 2005
Assistant Vice
President of External
Affairs for University
Advancement*

Dear Alumni:

Throughout this magazine, you can read about some of our extraordinary alumni and what they are accomplishing in many different aspects of life. In just a few days, we will honor five singular individuals by inducting them into the Long Purple Line, Northwestern State University's Alumni Hall of Distinction. Each person in this class of inductees has had great impact for our university and they serve as inspiration for our current students, who are, themselves, poised to accomplish great things.

The Long Purple Line induction will coincide with a new event we are extremely excited to present in partnership with the Louisiana Seafood Board: Flavor of Louisiana, an evening in which chefs and restaurants from around the state will offer samplings of seafood dishes, along with music and fun. We would love to have you join us for what promises to be a memorable event.

The spring semester moves swiftly here on campus as we are in the midst of a full schedule of events and receptions for both alumni and prospective students. If you are interested in becoming more involved with NSU, I urge you to do so. If you know of a student exploring college options, please introduce them to the Northwestern State family. We can help.

I thank you for your continued support of NSU and hope to see you at an event soon.

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NSU ALUMNI OFFICERS

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1st Vice President..... Dr. P. Cade Brumley, Stonewall, 2002
2nd Vice President..... Caron Chester Coleman,
Natchitoches, 2000
Secretary..... Patricia Hrapmann, New Orleans, 1973, 1978
Treasurer..... Mike Wilburn, Shreveport, 1975

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Vice President for External Affairs Jerry Pierce, 1961
Assistant Vice President of External Affairs
for University Advancement Drake Owens, 2004, 2005
Associate Director of
Alumni Affairs Vanner Erikson, 2011, 2014

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Tommy Chester..... Natchitoches, 1969
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John Evans..... Natchitoches, 1992
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Dr. Leonard Williams..... New Orleans, 1993

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

John Pearce..... Livonia, SGA President
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Doug Ireland, 1986
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Karalee Scouten, 2015
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Good News:

NSU records largest spring enrollment in over a decade

Northwestern State University's spring semester enrollment of 9,191 is an increase of 540 students, or 6.1 percent, over last spring's registration count of 8,651.

This spring's enrollment numbers are the highest for a spring term at the university since 2006, the first year of selective admissions, and the largest gain in spring semester enrollment since 2003.

NSU Acting President Dr. Chris Maggio attributed the substantial enrollment increase to "the university's continuing focus on academic excellence, expanded efforts to attract and retain outstanding students and an increased emphasis on meaningful and effective student services."

Maggio said another major factor in the enrollment gain was Northwestern's decision "to provide full funding for TOPS scholarships this spring to assist students in making the difficult transition to reductions in the program enacted by the state."

TOPS recipients at universities statewide received total funding for the scholarships during the fall semester, but TOPS allocations were reduced by nearly 60 percent for the spring.

Maggio noted that former NSU president Dr. Jim Henderson, now head of the University of Louisiana System, "made the decision to use funds from reserves, increased fall enrollment revenues, private funding and other sources to honor the university's commitment to TOPS student for the spring, and that was obviously a good investment."

The NSU acting president said student services were enhanced last year with the opening of an Academic Success Center in Watson Library to

improve campus wide tutoring and academic support for students. A gift from State Sen. Gerald Long and his wife Rose helped fund the establishment of the center.

"Everything that is accomplished at Northwestern can be attributed to the combined efforts of students, faculty, alumni, friends and stakeholders. When these groups with a common interest in advancing our university work together, we can do great things."

—Dr. Chris Maggio

Northwestern has also focused increased attention on realigning and developing academic programs that give students expanded skills and training for high demand jobs in this region and across the state.

NSU has developed a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development to develop a trained workforce for CRSA, a global leader of next-generation technology services and solutions at the Cyber Research Park in Bossier City. Through this partnership, NSU will triple the size of the renowned computer information systems program.

The university has also signed several new agreements with community and technical colleges throughout Louisiana to make it easier for students with an associate degree to obtain a bachelor's degree.

Last fall, Northwestern State created the first competency based degree program in the state. The program in computer information systems allows students to learn and advance at their own pace as they demonstrate mastery of specific skills.

A new Bachelor of Applied Science in Resource Management has been created, and the university has also developed post associate and post baccalaureate certificates in quality control and project management along with a post baccalaureate certificate in business analytics.

Northwestern State was ranked as most affordable online college in the United States by College Choice, a leading authority in college and university rankings and resources.

Northwestern State is also implementing a new Doctor of Education degree that will prepare individuals for leadership positions that focus on adult learning and development, particularly in the community college setting.

Maggio said, "These innovative academic advancements will make the university even more attractive to prospective students in the years ahead."



Veteran principal turning around inner-city Houston high school



Dr. Bertie Simmons dresses up as a rapper at Furr High School in Houston as students wrote a rap for a 2015 event promoting the school's one-to-one laptop initiative. Simmons, a Northwestern State graduate and principal of Furr, helped her school receive a \$10 million grant from XQ: The Super School Project for reimagining high school.



Dr. Bertie Simmons, principal of Houston's Furr High School, meets with Houston ISD Superintendent Richard Carranza after her school was awarded a \$10 million grant from XQ: The Super School Project. Ten schools across the nation received the grant for reimagining high school. Simmons, a Northwestern State graduate, turned Furr from a dropout factory full of violence to a school that graduates more than 90 percent of its students. Photos courtesy of Houston ISD.

On Bertie Simmons' first day as principal of Houston's Furr High School, one student threw another student through a plate-glass window.

That was 17 years ago when the school on Houston's east side was overrun with more than a dozen distinct gangs. But Furr students will be moving into a new facility this coming school year -- one where the walls will be completely made of glass. Simmons and her staff don't worry anymore about the nonstop violence that plagued the school and the community.

Now phrases like "Genius Time," an innovative class structure where students can explore topics ranging from climate data to iPad movie making to Tai Chi, are the agenda items topping Dr. Simmons' list. The 82-year-old Northwestern State graduate shattered the school's thug image and sparked a turnaround, resulting in Furr being named one of 10 "super schools" to receive a \$10 million grant sponsored by XQ Institute. The institute is led by Laurene Powell Jobs, widow of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs.

Simmons said education is "frozen in time," and she wants to guide students in developing creativity and innovation.

"One of the things we're focusing on is personalizing instruction," said Simmons, who added the school will use the \$2 million received across five years in a variety of ways, including constructing a community center and a health clinic. "We want to identify students' passions and capitalize on those."

"Our education system is producing test takers. But we want to prepare our students to be creative and innovative to meet the demands of the 21st century. We want problem solvers, and if we're preparing for one big test, we don't have time to do that."

Simmons, who served as an elementary school principal before eventually becoming the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, came out of retirement in 2000 and promised the HISD she'd spend three months at Furr until they could hire a new principal.

She'd been in retirement five years already, but the death of her 16-year-

old granddaughter Ashley in a skiing accident pushed Simmons back into the work force.

"(Ashley's) dream was to grow up and make the world a better place for all people," Simmons said. "She couldn't do that, but perhaps I thought I could do that."

"I wasn't sure I would be accepted in a minority school and be respected with the gangs and the violence. A kid was shot on campus the year before I came. Gangs had a contract out on the former principal's life."

Simmons remembers a Houston television station interviewing a female student and asking about her hopes and dreams.

"That girl said she hoped that she didn't get killed before the end of the week," Simmons said. "That devastated me. We had to work even harder to stop the violence."

About two years into Simmons' tenure, a riot occurred on campus that served as one of the turning points in the school. Instead of sending the 32 gang members to alternative school, Simmons said she called a meeting between all of the school's gang leaders, which was against school policy.

"I asked them what it would take to bring peace into their lives and peace into the school," Simmons said. "They didn't trust anyone, not the government, not the school system -- only those in their gangs or their families. They thought that 9/11 didn't happen, thought it was a movie to fool them because they are poor minorities."

Simmons suggested a trip to New York City to see the Ground Zero site, and after much convincing of students and administrators as well as scrounging for funding, she led a trip comprised of gang leaders and honor society members, the latter group having just nine members.

"We signed a contract to stop the violence if we took this trip, and the gang leaders helped me turn this school around," Simmons said of her early days. "If you show respect, you get respect."

"I think it helped me that I was older. I think they see me as a grandmother figure. They see me as somebody who trusts them, so they in turn trust me. We couldn't get to academics if we first didn't stop the violence."

When Simmons took over in 2000, less than half of Furr students were graduating from a high school where 95 percent of the kids are on free lunch. The economics haven't changed, but the outcomes have. The graduation is above 90 percent now. Furr High is buried in a pollution-heavy area of Houston, so environmental and social justice were tangible topics outside of a traditional classroom curriculum.

Furr established a Green Institute three years ago in which students participate in planting trees and gardening as well as communicating environmental sustainability to its community as part of the Houston Greenbelt. Other successes include the creation of a fine arts magnet complete with music, theater and dance to a school that didn't have a band when Simmons arrived. Culinary students run a coffee shop that is the setting for twice-monthly parent meetings at a school which previously had little to no parental involvement.

The next step is the implementation of "Genius Time," which allows students to identify topics of interest which can be teacher-led or even student-operated.

"It's part of trying to give students a choice. We want them to have a voice and have a choice," said Simmons, who teaches a class on social understanding social justice through rap and hip hop. "We started Genius Time this year, and what's happening is that students are taking over and starting to teach their own topics.

"I had two senior girls that wanted to start a 'Someone to Run To' mentor program for freshmen girls. Another two students wanted to start a debate team, except they wanted to run it and be in charge. There's a lot of different things where kids are assuming responsibility for their own education, and that's what I want to happen."

Simmons, who said she's always been an "outlier," also has different ideas on punishment. Furr rarely suspends students, instead giving fellow students a say in the 'Ye Olde Thinkery.'

"We want to implement restorative justice and rebuild those relationships," Simmons said. "We want to resolve problems in this student court of sorts. Furr used to be a pipeline from the high school to prison. Now other schools are coming to visit us and implement our systems and ideas."

"It's part of trying to give students a choice. We want them to have a voice and have a choice."

Simmons is a product of rural Jackson Parish, graduating from Chatham High School before attending Northwestern State. She graduated college in 1955, taking just three years to obtain

her elementary education and English degrees.

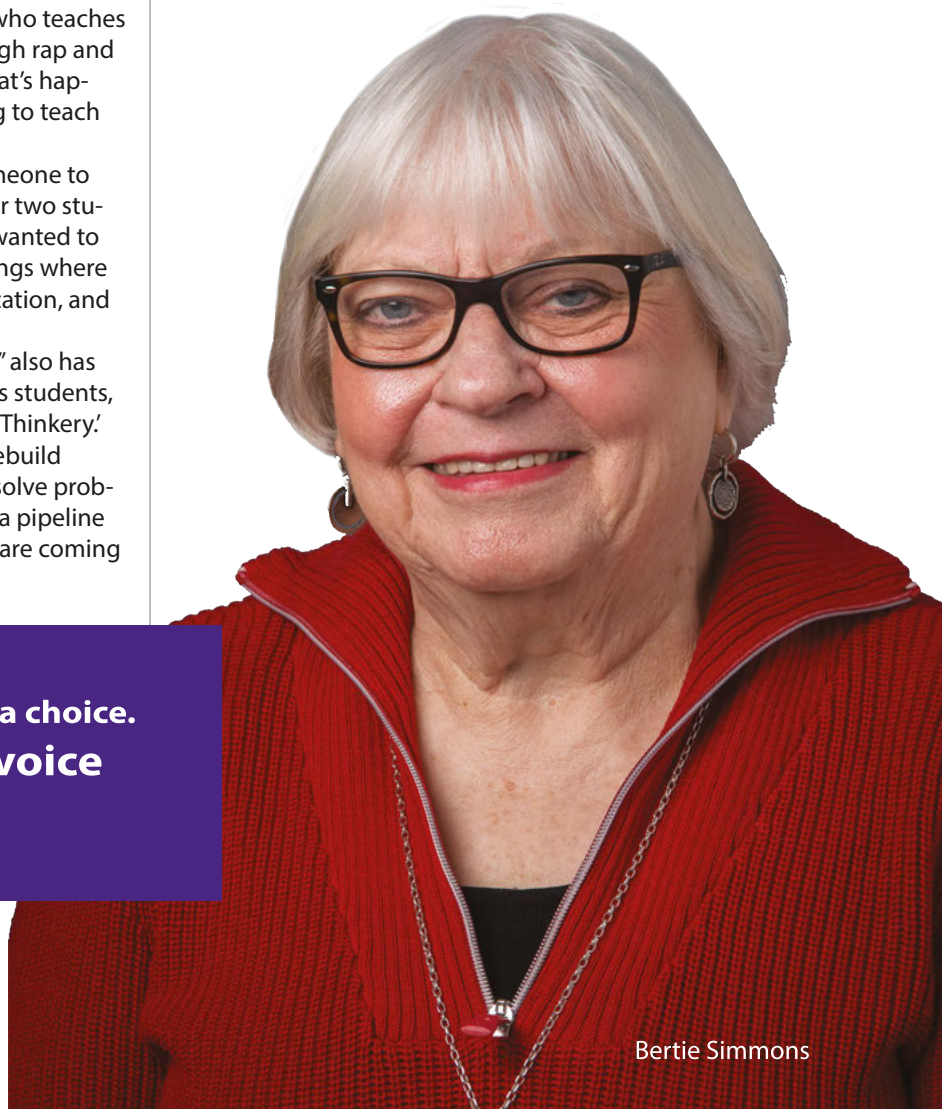
"I worked my way through college and took summer classes, too," Simmons said. "It's not necessarily how smart you are, it's how hard you're willing to work and the effort you put into it.

"Instead of saying, 'Look at my grades, I must be smart,' it's about having a growth mindset. When a student comes in and says he or she doesn't get Algebra II, I tell them that they don't get Algebra II -- yet. It's a whole different way of thinking."

The former Demon may come from humble beginnings in Depression-era rural Louisiana, but the Simmons-led turnaround of Furr High School has garnered national and international attention.

Simmons has visited with reporters from the New York Times and National Public Radio to filmmakers from France and Spain regarding the school's recovery. And the 82-year-old who's already spent five years of retirement in her 60s says she can't see an end in sight.

"I fell in love with these students," said Simmons, who's the oldest principal in Texas and possibly the entire country. "I cannot tell you how excited I am to move into our new school building this coming fall that will be updated with the latest technology. It will be the highlight of this side of the city. The building will have all glass walls so you can see what's going on in every classroom."



Bertie Simmons

LONG PURPLE LINE

HALL OF DISTINCTION

Five distinguished alumni will be inducted into Long Purple Line

Northwestern State University will honor five graduates by inducting them into the University's alumni hall of distinction, the Long Purple Line. The 2017 inductees are Dr. Julian Bailes of Chicago, the late Joe Delaney, Dr. James Henderson and Gerard F. Thomas Jr. of Natchitoches and Lenn Dohmann Prince of Ruston.

Honorees will be honored at a luncheon on April 7 at 11:30 a.m. in the Friedman Student Union Ballroom. Tickets are \$20. For more information, call (318) 357-4414 or go to northwesternalumni.com/lpl17.

Since 1990, 120 NSU alumni have been named to the Long Purple Line.

Bailes has become a leading figure in the field of sports-related concussion research

A world-renowned neurosurgeon, Bailes is an advisor to the NFL Players Association, the NCAA's Competitive Safeguards and Medical Safety Committee, the Southeastern Conference and Pop Warner football. In the recent movie "Concussion" starring Will Smith as Bailes' colleague Dr. Bennet Omalu, award-winning actor Alec Baldwin portrayed Bailes in a film that brought sports concussion issues to a mainstream audience spurring discussions of the safety and future of American sports.

Bailes has testified in front of Congress regarding safety aspects of sports, particularly football from the Pop Warner level up to the NFL, and has taken bold positions related to safety of competitors. He has been instrumental in implementing return-to-play protocols in all 50 states and internationally.

Bailes is chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery and co-director of the Northshore Neurological Institute in Chicago. Bailes is a founding member and director of the Brain Injury Research Institute, which focuses on the study of traumatic brain injuries and their prevention. His research has been instrumental in the understanding of the clinical evidence of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a progressive, degenerative disease found in individuals who have been subjected to multiple concussions or sub-concussive blows.

He is a 2016 recipient of the Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership Award presented by the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

Delaney, a Haughton native, was a two-time All-America running back in 1979-80 for the Demons, and joined Mark Duper, Victor Oatis and Mario Johnson on the Demons' 1981 NCAA championship 4x100 meter relay team, earning All-America honors.

Delaney was selected in the second round of the 1981 NFL draft and was the 1981 AFC Rookie of the Year for the Chiefs and played in the Pro Bowl.

Delaney died June 29, 1983, trying to save three children from drowning in a pond at an amusement park in Monroe. One of the three survived.

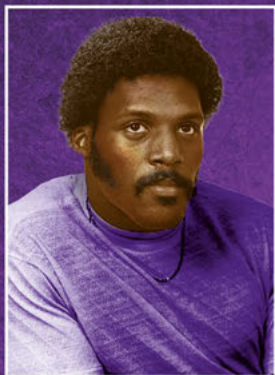
His No. 44 Demon football jersey was retired at halftime of his final game at NSU. Since his death, no Kansas City player has worn his No. 37. He is immortalized in several ways at Northwestern State, including plaques at Turpin Stadium and the Ledet Track Complex, and with the permanent football team captains receiving Joe Delaney Memorial Leadership Awards annually. The Demons' spring football game has been known as the Joe Delaney Bowl since 1989 and the Joe Delaney Distinguished Supporter Award goes each year to a leading backer of NSU Athletics.

Delaney was posthumously awarded the Presidential Citizen's Medal from President Ronald Reagan, presented at his funeral by then Vice President George H.W. Bush to the Delaney family. Delaney is enshrined in the N Club Hall of Fame, the Ark-La-Tex Museum of Champions, the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, the College Football Hall of Fame and the Chiefs' Ring of Honor at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City.

His story was told in the 2015 ESPN film "Delaney."



Bailes



Delaney



Henderson



Prince



Thomas

Henderson became president of the University of Louisiana System on Jan. 1. He oversees one of the largest university systems in the United States with more than 90,000 students on nine campuses.

Henderson was president of Northwestern State for two years. In that period, NSU increased overall enrollment and improved its retention rate. Enrollment in the fall 2016 semester increased by seven percent to 9,819, the highest total since selective admissions were implemented in 2005. Northwestern State worked to strategically develop new programs that give students access to high demand skills and give employers in the region a competitive advantage.

As NSU's president, Henderson worked closely with students, faculty, staff, alumni and stakeholders to strengthen the university. He was honored at the spring 2016 commencement ceremony with a resolution from Northwestern State's Faculty Senate for his "multiple creative and innovative efforts to revitalize the life of the university."

Henderson was chancellor of Bossier Parish Community College from 2009 - 2014. In that time, BPCC grew its enrollment by more than 84 percent and increased annual certificate and degree completions by 90 percent. He was senior vice president, workforce and economic development/career & technical education for the Louisiana Community & Technical College System from 2005 to 2009.

From 2001 to 2005, he was director of administration and director of workforce development for the

Louisiana Department of Labor.

Henderson was in the private sector for 10 years in hotel management.

Prince is a native of Opelousas who began studies at Northwestern State in 1972, where she was a member of the NSU Chorale and played French horn in the NSU Orchestra. She was a member of Delta Zeta Sorority and represented NSU in the 1974 Miss Louisiana Pageant as Miss Northwestern-Lady of the Bracelet. She graduated in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in vocal performance education and later earned a master's degree in vocal performance from the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

While living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Prince continued her vocal studies with teacher and pedagogue Jane Snow, performing in many vocal ensembles in Albuquerque and Santa Fe and with the Southwest Opera Chorus in Albuquerque. While working towards her master's degree, Prince was awarded a scholarship from the University of Miami to study in Salzburg, Austria, during the Salzburg Opera Festival where she studied and was coached by numerous world-renowned opera performers and teachers.

After moving to Ruston in 1992, Prince was host for many years to Northwestern State's north-central Louisiana recruiting reception in her home. She was also a member of the Ruston Masterworks Chorus and the soprano soloist for many performances.

Prince and her husband Danny own and operate several businesses in

several states, including nursing and rehabilitation centers, pharmacies and therapy companies, as well as Port au Prince restaurant on Lake Claiborne and Port au Prince Cross Lake.

She was inducted into the Mrs. H.D. Dear Sr. and Alice Estelle Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame in 2016.

Thomas earned a bachelor's degree from Northwestern State in 1943. He was on active duty in the United States Marine Corps from 1943 to 1946. Thomas received a degree from LSU Law School in 1948.

He became a highly regarded attorney with the firm of Thomas, Dunahoe and Gregory practicing primarily in the field of negligence, workman's compensation and general trial practice. Thomas was selected by his peers to appear in the publication, "The Best Lawyers in America."

As an attorney, Thomas devoted countless hours to the profession through his activities in professional organizations. He was state committeeman for the American College of Trial Lawyers and American Trial Lawyers Association and president and state committeeman of the Louisiana Trial Lawyers Association.

Thomas served as a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association House of Delegates, chairman of the State Bar Association section on negligence, worker's compensation and admiralty and president of the LSU Law School Alumni Association. He was a member of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana from 1983 to 1987, serving as chairman in 1987.

Spotlights

NSU alum **Charles McDuffie** was one of six Texarkana citizens recognized during the 12th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Purpose Driven Acts of Kindness Gala. The awards covered various public service categories inspired by the slain civil rights leader's life and legacy.

The categories were Education, Spirit, Leadership, Business, Service, Community Involvement, Volunteerism, Justice, Individual and Drum Major.

McDuffie received the Acts of Kindness Justice Award. He attended NSU from 1985 to 1987 and he has served as a law enforcement officer since 2005. He currently works as a campus police officer for the Liberty-Eylau Independent School District. He's been married to Lisa McDuffie for the last 25 years, and they have a daughter, Kristin. Since starting his career, McDuffie has earned the Mental Health Police Officers Certification, Self Defense Instructors Certification and Homeland Security Certification, and he currently serves on Bowie County Child Welfare Board and the Texarkana Teen Court.

Lola Dunahoe (1971) of Natchitoches was appointed by Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards to serve on the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System, the group responsible for managing Northwestern State, Grambling, Louisiana Tech, McNeese, Nicholls, Southeastern, the University of Louisiana-Lafayette, University of Louisiana-Monroe and University of New Orleans. She will serve as an at-large member of the board.

Dunahoe is office manager for the Dunahoe Law Firm in Natchitoches. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree at NSU and holds a lifetime teaching certificate.

Judge James "Jimmy" Genovese took oath in January as the newly-elected associate justice of the Louisi-

ana Supreme Court 3rd District.

Genovese took his oath of office, which was administered by U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeal Chief Judge Carl Stewart, in front of a crowd of nearly 1,000 people, including Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards.

Genovese received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University in 1971 and his juris doctorate from Loyola University in New Orleans in 1974. The Opelousas-native served as a judge ad hoc for the Opelousas City Court from 1975-1989 and was a Louisiana state district court judge from 1995-2004. He has served as a judge for the Louisiana 3rd Circuit Court of Appeal since 2005 and is currently serving on multiple committees for the 3rd District Court of Appeal including the Information Technology Committee, Costs Committee, Security Committee, Building Committee and Continuity of Operations and Emergency Preparedness Committee.



Quincy Spencer

Quincy Spencer (2005), director of New Student & Family Programs at the University of Arkansas, was elected as the National Orientation Director's Association (NODA) president-elect. Spencer is a former Freshman Connector and coordinator of New Student Orientation at NSU. He was Mr. NSU 2002, NSU Homecoming King and

received many honors as an engaged student.

NODA is the professional association for orientation, transition and retention in higher education. The mission of NODA is to provide education, leadership and professional development in the fields of college student orientation, transition and retention. The organization strives to create a community of practice that defines and enriches the fields of orientation, transition, and retention.

Coach Ed Orgeron was named head football coach at Louisiana State University last fall.

Orgeron played as a defensive lineman at Northwestern State from 1981-84 before moving into a 33-year coaching career. Before his tenure at LSU under Coach Les Miles as defensive line coach, his coaching jobs included a stint at USC as a defensive coordinator and an interim head coach. He served as the head coach at Ole Miss from 2005-07 and a defensive line coach for the Saints in 2008.

In January, he was named one of Louisiana Life magazines Louisianians of the Year for 2016.

Natchitoches native **Lt. Col. Jonathan D. Lloyd** took command of the Louisiana National Guard's 165th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion during a ceremony in Bossier City in January. The battalion, which has assisted in during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Ike, Gustav and Isaac, helped distribute resources during Louisiana's devastating floods in March and August of 2016, as well as served after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. Units from the battalion have also supported Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The battalion will deploy to Afghanistan at the end of 2017.

Lloyd received his commission from the Louisiana Officer Candidate School

in 1996, earned a bachelor's degree at NSU in 1997 and is a graduate of Armor Officer Basic Course, Maneuver Captains Career Course, Intermediate Level Education and Air Assault School.

"Stealing Sunrise 2: Malibu Trail," an action drama film starring NSU alum **Rhett Crosby**, premiered in December. Set in 1995, the film is a sequel to a 2015 film in which two strangers interconnected to violent events from 9 years earlier team up to hunt down the person responsible.

The original film, set in 1986, tells the story of four friends who embark on a crime spree in an attempt to escape their dreary city and retire in Malibu. The recent sequel begins nearly a decade later with unresolved business, characters from the past and a chance to make right their earlier crimes.

Crosby attended NSU from 1994-99 where he was starting defensive tackle for three seasons and earned a degree in journalism. Always passionate about theatre and the arts, he gained experience in stage acting and performing and, after working with professional actors, agents, casting directors, transitioned to professional commercial and film work. He is skilled at voices, accents, sounds and impersonations and can be seen in dozens of commercials, TV shows and films.

Dr. Stephanie Hennigan was featured in a business profile for Buffalo Creek Magazine, a newsletter for her community near Dallas. Hennigan, a Natchitoches native and 1999 graduate of the Louisiana Scholars' College, is a rheumatologist with the Texas Rheumatology Institute in Rockwall, Texas.

Hennigan began her rheumatology practice in Richardson, Texas in 2008 and moved to Rockwall in 2011. Texas Rheumatology Institute addresses the needs of all rheumatic patients, which includes diagnosis and treatment of arthritis, lupus, scleroderma

and related or unexplained conditions. Last December, she moved to a new office space in Rockwall and engaged another rheumatologist to join the practice.

In addition to seeing 500 patients per month, Hennigan is the only rheumatologist with privileges at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital. She is the author of several articles on the subject and speaks to physicians and residents of assisted living facilities on symptoms, diagnosis and treatments of rheumatoid diseases.

Hennigan and her husband Ted Brockway have a 4-year-old daughter.

After earning her degree in liberal arts with a concentration in chemistry



Stephanie Hennigan and daughter Fiona

at NSU, Hennigan earned her medical degree from LSU New Orleans where she developed an interest in immunology, a subset of internal medicine. She completed her three-year residency in internal medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina and began a fellowship at the University of California at San Diego.

In her free time, Hennigan enjoys hunting with her husband and is an extreme couponer, which benefits her local food pantry.



Kayla Ashford of Baton Rouge, a senior who graduated last December, was the first Northwestern State University student to receive her NSU class ring in an evening ceremony on Normal Hill last fall, presented by past president Dr. Jim Henderson. Rings were stored in a historic trunk and guarded on campus by ROTC Cadets prior to the ceremony, which began in Turpin Stadium. The rings were carried in a procession through campus to Normal Hill, accompanied by graduating seniors, their guests, NSU administrators and a ceremonial drum escort. NSU class rings and jewelry are available to graduates and alumni through Josten's. Rings are numbered sequentially, beginning with Ring #1 that was presented to Henderson, a 1994 graduate, last summer by the staff in Alumni and Development. His wife Tonia Henderson, a 1993 NSU graduate, was presented with a matching necklace pendant. Six NSU class ring options are available. Graduating seniors can order their rings, along with graduation invitations and other items, during Grad Fest each semester and receive their rings during a ceremony just prior to commencement. Alumni can order a class ring or other NSU jewelry by visiting Jostens.com and selecting Northwestern State University as the user's school group.

On the Bookshelf: Sands publishes third novel in ‘Alabama’ series

“Forever, Alabama,” the third installment in a book series by Susan Noel Sands, was released in March from the Tule Publishing Group and is available in digital and print formats at all major online distributors and some bookstores. Sands’ novels explore romance and self-discovery in a small southern town with a strong dose of humor.

“I’ve never aspired to be an academic, but I craft smartly-written, Southern, family-involved women’s fiction/romance with lots of humor,” she said. “They are fun with substance.”

“Forever, Alabama” and Sands’ previous two books, “Again, Alabama” (2015) and “Love, Alabama,” (2016), are set the same small Alabama town, and although independent stories, share characters from the same family.

“I grew up in a small Southern town, so I’m intimately familiar with the dynamics of the culture. Close family ties, tiny schools, a high interest in the doings of others within the community and so forth. I use my own experiences without revealing individuals from time to time. I mean, some of it is just too perfect not to,” she said.

Reviews from Sands’ first two books were positive, both earning over four-star average ratings on Goodreads and Amazon, which encourages her in writing the next story.

“The most satisfying responses I’ve received have been from readers who reach out to let me know that my stories have gotten them through trying emotional times,” she said. “One reader read my book aloud to her mother during her last days. I was incredibly touched to share that with her.

My books aren’t heavy literary fiction, but they are escapism reading. Sometimes we need that in today’s world.”

Sands graduated from NSU in 1989 with a B.S. in elementary education. She met her husband, Doug Sands, who graduated with a physical education degree in 1989, also at NSU. She credits a lifelong love of reading and growing up in the small town of Negreet for feeding her desire to write small-town Southern fiction.

She lives in Johns Creek, Georgia, with her husband and their teen daughter. She has a son attending college at Kennesaw State University—Southern Polytechnic, and one who is an employed graduate of the University of Georgia’s Terry College of Business.

As a published author, Sands appears at book festivals and book events for signings and appears on panels with other authors. She also gives talks at women’s groups and local book clubs. With book release events planned for this spring, she will be featured at the Dahlonega Literary Festival and will appear at a multi-author event at FoxTale Book Shoppe (foxtalebookshoppe.com/events) on April 29.

“Music of all kinds, cooking, reading great stories and watching movies are just a few things that get my creativity flowing. I’m also inspired by other writers and individuals who refuse to quit when their journey seems impossible,” Sands said. “I’m such a late bloomer. I started writing at forty. This has been such a challenging and rewarding journey, so I encourage everyone at any age to go after your dreams.”



Dillon Roy part of archaeology team to discover shipwreck



NSU Alum Dillon Roy retrieved artifacts from a ship that sunk in Pensacola Bay in 1559. Roy was one of a team of University of West Florida students and faculty who discovered and excavated the shipwreck site.

Northwestern State University alumnus Dillon Roy was part of a team of student/staff field archaeologists from the University of West Florida that discovered a shipwreck near Pensacola, Florida, last year.

Roy, a graduate student, was among the divers who discovered the ship, referred to as Emanuel Point III, covered with sand in seven feet of water. The ship was part of a fleet that in 1559 brought Conquistador Don Tristan de Luna and his army to what is now suburban Pensacola, site of the first European settlement in the United States. Most of that fleet sank during a hurricane that struck the coast shortly after Luna’s arrival.

The Emanuel Point Shipwreck Site, Florida’s oldest, was first discovered in 1992 when the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research conducted an underwater inventory of Pensacola Bay and searchers located the remains of a Spanish galleon. Experts suspected that other vessels from the Luna fleet were submerged in the bay and located EP II in 2006. EP III was discovered about 200 meters from shore, which could indicate it was a small vessel and possibly one of the earliest ships built in the New World.

Roy was one of the divers who returned to the surface with artifacts in their hands. The team from the UWF archaeology program discovered ballast stones, iron concretions, an articulated hull of the ship with frames and hull planking and remnants of ceramics carried on the ship.

Continued on page 9



Student Services Center named for Jimmy Long Sr.

Northwestern State University has named its Student Services Center in honor of former state representative and member of the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System Jimmy D. Long Sr.

Long passed away in August 2016. The facility is home to the Offices of University Recruiting, First Year Experience and Leadership Development, Financial Aid, Student Employment Scholarships, Admissions, Veteran's Affairs and the Vice President for the Student Experience as well as the Registrar's Office and Cashier's Office.

Dillon Roy continued from page 8

"I'm currently working on my master's degree in historical archaeology focusing on maritime archaeology at UWF," Roy said. "I've been diving since January 2013. When I got out to the maritime portion of field school as a supervisor last summer I had heard that we had a substantial hit from a previous magnetometer survey and that some of the target dives that followed had yielded a few possible pieces of ballast stone. No excavations had been conducted on the possible new site however though."

When the team investigated the area, the first dive team installed a 1 x 1-meter square grid for a test unit. Dive two's team, consisting of Roy, UWF maritime archaeology professor Dr. Greg Cook and field school student Rick Ramos, went down with a dredge to begin excavating the test unit.

"Shortly into dredging we uncov-

ered ship structure, confirming that we did indeed have a new wreck," Roy said. "I think the most thrilling thing about the discovery for me was realizing just how big of a deal this was and that I got to be a part of it. I never imagined that as a grad student that I would be involved with something this incredible."

Roy, a native of Baton Rouge, graduated from NSU in 2014 with a degree in general studies with a concentration in social sciences and a double minor in anthropology and English.

"I would in no way be where I am today in my studies had it not been for the instruction and mentoring of NSU anthropology and archaeology professors Dr. Pete Gregory and Dr. Tommy Hailey," he said.

Luna, the conquistador, and about 1,500 soldiers, colonists, slaves and Aztec Indians traveled in 11 ships from Veracruz, Mexico, to Pensacola. Three shipwrecks still remain undiscovered

in the bay, but the UWF team possibly found another one, or even all three, based on a few of the magnetic anomalies detected last year. UWF students divided into two groups and excavated the bay for 11 weeks.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved a permit for the UWF team to conduct test excavations through March 2017 to determine the extent of the shipwreck and the type of wood used to build the ship.

A Florida Division of Historical Resources' special category grant for \$290,000 funded part of the excavation. The matching grant awarded to UWF in 2014 provided funding for faculty, staff and students to conduct fieldwork, laboratory analysis, artifact conservation and curation, archival research in Spain and public outreach for two years. UWF will apply for similar grants in the future to fund further excavations.

Historic Varnado Hall transforming into 21st century living-learning college

ALEC HORTON
Current Sauce

Varnado Hall is undergoing extensive renovations. Architects redesigned the historic building to meet the needs of Creative and Performing Arts students and its location could not be more convenient.

The historic residence hall would attract CAPA students due to its new amenities: a performance space, a computer lab, art studios and 24-hour access to practice rooms.

In addition to these features, the university and Campus Living Villages (CLV) hope to build a recording studio and kitchen space into the dorm. Architects recently measured Varnado to determine the practicality of these features given the square footage available for each component. Their updated floor plan is expected soon.

Despite the new additions, there will be no change in bedroom size, and the dorm is still expected to open for the fall semester. Varnado Hall will accommodate 194 students at its full capacity—a minor expansion from its previous 180 beds.

"We are very excited to take an historic residential hall and transform it into a modern living/learning space for the 21st century student. The design concepts of

the new Varnado Hall center on student needs and how their residential life enhances their academic pursuits. I couldn't be happier that students will soon be living in Varnado once again," said acting President Dr. Chris Maggio

Freshman music education major Logan Guillot found one addition to Varnado particularly appealing.

"The 24-hour practice rooms," Guillot said. "In case CAPA is locked, you can practice at home. It gives music students all of these opportunities to improve whenever they want."

Guillot also said that he thinks adding a recording studio to the residence hall would draw in music business majors or students pursuing careers in audio production.

Assistant to the Provost Jennifer Kelly is an instrumental part of the renovation project, serving as the liaison between the university and CLV. In addition to having larger bedrooms compared to shared University Place rooms, CAPA students living in Varnado will benefit from having a faculty rector in the building. This staff member will have office hours in Varnado and organize activities to improve group dynamics.

"Students will have classes in that building and different things that are geared to their major," Kelly said. "This will be the first facility that Northwestern has that is truly a living-learning college."

Due to the specialized programming that will take place in the dorm, CAPA students who register to live in Varnado will have priority over students who are not involved in the department in any extent. Students who are not a part of CAPA activities will be able to apply for the residence hall, but will not be considered priority applicants.

One area of concern for students is price. "It might be a little more pricey, but that's understandable," Guillot said.

Kelly said that the university and CLV is finalizing the leasing price, pending the University of Louisiana System board's approval.

"I think it will be between a shared price and a private price at University Place," Kelly said. "We are building into the rent the programming and the special things in that facility. I think the students will definitely see a benefit for what they are paying in rent and the programming."

First constructed in 1939, Varnado Hall will open this fall as a 21st century residential college for students in Creative and Performing Arts.



Dr. Chad Thibodeaux, a professor of chemistry at Northwestern State University, is spearheading efforts to revitalize the university's astronomy observatory, which is located on the roof of Fournet Hall. The observatory could be used by students and the public for stargazing and astrophotography.

Naming opportunity available for astronomy observatory

Northwestern State University is restoring the university's astronomical observatory and hopes to offer programs not only for students, but also the public interested in studying the stars. NSU's School of Biological and Physical Sciences is acquiring new equipment for the observatory, a large dome structure located on the roof of Fournet Hall, and working towards making the facility functional for study and astrophotography.

Dr. Chad Thibodeaux, assistant professor of chemistry, who is spearheading the initiative, installed a new 10-inch telescope for students in the spring semester.

"We hope to use it for our astronomy class, which is required for all science ed majors, but we want to open it up to other majors as well," said Thibodeaux, who would like to install a CCD camera on the scope that is capable of astrophotography and photometry, measuring the brightness of stars. By itself the CCD only takes black and white photos and Thibodeaux would like to add a filter wheel and filters for photography and photometry. Right now, the camera on the scope has a webcam imager that can image solar system objects like the moon and planets. Thibodeaux also acquired a Coronado PST solar telescope made especially for viewing the sun. The solar scope has special filters that allow only a certain type of light through to see features on the sun like filaments,

sun spots and prominences.

"We could have stargazing nights that are open to the public and summer camps for kids," he said.

Natchitoches has little light pollution, so viewers can peer into the sky and clearly see galaxy clusters and other celestial bodies. The November super moon was particularly brilliant, Thibodeaux said.

"Astronomy is one of the few areas of science where amateurs contribute information that is used by professionals in the field," he said. He will encourage his students to become involved with the American Association of Variable Star Observers (AAVSO), to which students can submit data on various stars to databases for others to create models that tell observers how the stars function. Variable stars are those that vary in brightness over time.

"The stars I think most people find interesting are double stars," Thibodeaux said. "These are stars that tend to orbit each other. The students

seem to be interested nebulas and galaxies. I think because they tend to have these amazing structures and colors that we can image with our new telescope."

According to Dr. Francene Lemoine, director of the School of Biological and Physical Sciences, the observatory was last used about 10 years ago and she is hopeful that former students and/or faculty may come forward with information, stories or pictures of when it was in use.

"We don't know a lot about the history of the observatory," she said. "We have the blueprints for Fournet and we know there were plans for an observatory but we don't know if it was built when the building was constructed or installed during a renovation that took place from 1983-85."

Thibodeaux is exploring grants that could be utilized towards refurbishing the observatory. Donations to support the observatory, including naming opportunities, can be made through the NSU Foundation.

For more information on the observatory, contact Thibodeaux at cthibodeaux@nsula.edu or Lemoine at lemoinef@nsula.edu.

SWEPCO/Valley offer assistance to NSU



Public Service Commissioner Foster

Campbell, an NSU alumnus, worked with the university and Valley's successor, SWEPCO, to commit \$200,000 in remaining Valley capital credits to NSU for student scholarships, faculty support and campus improvements.

From left are Campbell, SWEPCO President Venita McCellon-Allen and NSU Past President Dr. Jim Henderson.

Valley Electric Membership Corporation and its successor, SWEPCO, announced the establishment of nearly \$300,000 in endowments and grants to Northwestern State University.

Public Service Commissioner Foster Campbell, an NSU alumnus, worked with Valley/SWEPCO to commit \$200,000 in remaining Valley capital credits to NSU for student scholarships, faculty support and campus improvements.

The Valley/SWEPCO commitment will be matched with \$80,000 in State Board of Regents funding, bringing the total donation to \$280,000.

"SWEPCO has worked diligently since purchasing Valley Electric in 2010 to refund \$25 million in capital credits owed to the families and businesses that were members of the co-op during its 70 years of operation," Campbell said. "More than 99 percent of that money has been returned to its rightful owners, and at my request the PSC has now approved the transfer of the remaining \$200,000 to NSU."

Shreveport-based SWEPCO com-

pleted the purchase of Natchitoches-based Valley Electric in 2010. As part of the \$100-million transaction, Valley's board of directors pledged to honor Valley's \$25 million in "patronage capital credits" owed to its members.

Patronage capital credits are accumulated by electric co-op members as their share of co-op earnings.

SWEPCO President Venita McCellon-Allen said the Shreveport-based utility conducted two rounds of payments to return the credits to Valley members and their heirs.

"We exhausted all efforts to return this money to its owners," McCellon-Allen said. "We are happy to close the books on these credits now by working with Commissioner Campbell and NSU to provide this important support for the university."

"It will keep alive for many years the legacy of Valley's service to this region," McCellon-Allen said.

According to Northwestern State administrators, the Valley/SWEPCO contribution will be dispersed in three ways to maximize its impact:

\$120,000 will be used to establish two endowment funds, the "Valley Electric/SWEPCO First Generation Endowed Scholarship" and the "Valley Electric/SWEPCO Endowed Professorship" in the NSU College of Business and Technology; and \$80,000 will be allocated to the NSU Columns Fund for student scholarships, support for faculty and staff, and capital improvements.

The first-generation scholarship will support students who are the first in their family to attend college. The endowed professorship will enable the university to recruit and retain faculty whose research, teaching and/or public service contribute to their department and the institution.

State matching contributions from the Board of Regents Support Fund will provide an additional \$40,000 for each of the two endowment funds, bringing the total impact of the Valley/SWEPCO contribution to \$280,000.

The territory of the former Valley Electric, now known as the Valley District of SWEPCO, includes approximately 30,000 households and 41,000 meters in eight parishes – Caddo, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, Vernon, Grant and Winn.

Family creates scholarship in thanks for compassionate care

One family's story of loss, recovery and healing is a testament to the compassionate care many receive from dedicated nurses. In this case, gratitude was transformed into support for students who are seeking a career in nursing.

Jennifer and Keenan Kelly of Natchitoches established the Carolyn Annette Kelly Endowed Scholarship in Nursing that will be presented to a junior-level Northwestern State University nursing student in clinicals. The scholarship is for one year and recipients can reapply. Recipients must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better. The scholarship honors the memory of the Kellys' infant daughter.

"On October 3, 2006, I was admitted to the hospital with complications from a twin pregnancy," Jennifer Kelly said, describing the weeks she spent on complete bedrest in a Shreveport hospital, an hour away from home. During her hospitalization, while Keenan was in Natchitoches finalizing the purchase of their new home and moving, Jennifer said "I became one of them."

"If they ordered out, so did I. We each had our 'money' bag which was a bio-hazard bag," she said. "I will never forget

these wonderful women and the care they showed."

On the night of Oct. 26, at 27 weeks, it was determined that Jennifer had lost one daughter, Carolyn Annette Kelly, and was at risk of losing her identical twin, Anderson Paige Kelly and was scheduled for emergency surgery. Anderson was born weighing 1 pound 14 ounces and was taken immediately to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit where she spent the next three months. Jennifer was impressed by the professionalism and caring of the nurses during her emergency situation and during the three months that Anderson was in NICU.

Today, Andi is a healthy 10-year-old in fourth grade at St. Mary's School in Natchitoches. She is involved in piano, dance, softball and basketball.

Keenan Kelly graduated from NSU in 1990 with a degree in business in administration and graduated from Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans in 1993. Jennifer earned a bachelor's degree in business and office education in 1991, master's in educational technology in 1999 and completed 30+ in educational leadership in 2004. Her current title at NSU is as-



Keenan and Jennifer Kelly, along with their daughter Anderson Paige Kelly, established a scholarship for an upper level NSU nursing student in memory of their daughter, Carolyn Annette Kelly.

sistant to the provost for academic support and auxiliary services.

For information on supporting student scholarships, visit northwesternalumni.com or call (318) 357-4414.

Carey scholarship will benefit criminal justice majors

A couple engaged in ministry, mentoring and literacy programs established a scholarship to benefit a student seeking a degree in criminal justice at Northwestern State University. The Don and LaKeisha Carey Scholarship will be awarded to a freshman or sophomore pursuing a degree in criminal justice. The recipient must maintain a grade point average of 2.75 or better. LaKeisha Gray Carey is a 2008 graduate of NSU's Department of Criminal Justice, History and Social Science and described the ideal recipient as "someone who needs financial assistance to pursue their dream and career in the Criminal Justice Department. I know that person will touch many lives in our justice system and I would like to help assist with that."

"We love to give back because we believe that success not only defined by the number of milestones we obtained for ourselves, but also by the number of people we reach back and pull along the way. It's just our heart to help others," Mrs. Carey said. She is a practicing attorney who represents children and recently published her first children's book entitled "Cankeyo, You Can Keep Your Dreams Alive!"

LaKeisha Carey graduated as valedictorian of Bernice High School in 2004 and attended NSU on a scholarship where she majored in pre-law and criminal justice. During her college career, she was very

active in community service projects and organizations. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a 3.8 grade point average in 2007. She began law school at Southern University Law Center in 2008, graduated in the top 5 percent of her law school class in May 2011 and was sworn into the Louisiana State Bar in October of that year. Last year, she and her sorority sisters created the L.I.F.E. (Ladies Investing in Future Education) to benefit an African American female student at NSU. Mrs. Carey specifically named Department Head Joe Morris and Associate Professor Shirley Snyder as mentors who cared for her and her classmates.

She and Don met through a mutual friend.

Don Carey is a professional football player with the Detroit Lions. He grew up in Norfolk, Virginia, and attended Norfolk State University where he earned a degree in building construction technology before entering the National Football League draft. In addition to his athletic career, he pursued a master's degree in theology and established the Don Carey International Ministry. Mrs. Carey serves as president of the organization. DCIM is based in Chesapeake, Virginia, where the couple lives with their toddler son Victor during the off-season.



Don and LaKeisha Carey with their son Victor

"This ministry was created to help educate and make leaders for Christ who can adequately defend their faith," Mrs. Carey said. "Don is also the co-founder and ambassador of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Youth and Literacy programs which operates in several underprivileged school in Detroit. It's a literacy program geared toward STEM designed for kids grades level K through 12. Don and several of his teammates go to the schools every month to read with and do different activities with the students."

For more information on Don Carey International Ministries, visit dcimin.org. For more information on NSU's Department of Criminal Justice, History and Social Science, visit criminaljustice.nsula.edu. For information on supporting student scholarships, contact the NSU Foundation at (318) 357-4414 or visit northwesternalumni.com.

Sabri Thompson chosen for elite 5-Man Good Works Team for service activities

Sometimes, the spotlight finds the right person.

It did when Sabri Thompson, Northwestern State's senior guard, was announced by the National Association of Basketball Coaches as a member of the five-man 2017 Allstate NABC Good Works Team in Division I basketball.

Thompson lined up alongside players from Georgia Tech, Iowa State, DePaul and Princeton on the roster of five seniors who have done remarkable community service work during their college careers. They will join another fivesome from lower divisions at the end of March in Phoenix, site of this year's NCAA Final Four, where they will lead some service projects and be



recognized on the game's grandest stage.

"Sabri Thompson is that guy who does everything he's supposed to do, and more," said 18th-year NSU basketball coach Mike McConathy. "He makes great grades (a 3.7 grade point average in business and accounting), he's been involved in so many things on our campus, in our community and elsewhere.

"I told him earlier this season, 'Sabri, I really need to apologize to you, because I don't appreciate you enough and don't show you enough attention.

You always do what you're supposed to do. The people who always do the right things seemingly don't get the attention. This is one time when the guy who does the right things is getting the respect and admiration he deserves."

The 21-year-old native of Newark, Del., was showered with congratulatory social media messages by teammates, classmates, fans and friends back home when the NABC made its Feb. 7 announcement. It was a shock to Thompson, thanks to McConathy keeping the news to himself before the end of the Demons' morning practice that day.

"The way Coach Mike presented it could not have been better. He got emotional and gave me the shout-out in front of the Demon family," said Thompson. "He told the guys that people who do well don't often get recognized, and he actually said my name, but I had no idea he was about to say, 'well, you're getting recognized now.' I'm still shocked.

"It's not even about me. I want to thank everybody who helps me out, and I know there are those who I don't even know about. I do appreciate it, and I'm glad I can represent the school in a good way," he said. "I just thank God for everything and everybody."

Thompson's faith has been a motivator in many of his service initiatives, notably a mission trip to China as part



of the Sports Reach USA Basketball Team after his sophomore season at NSU.

"The China experience sticks out because it was humbling. In America we don't understand how good we really have it," he said. "They have a lot of advanced cities, but when you get out in the countryside, you see how different it is in the biggest country in the world. We need to appreciate what we have in America."

Thompson has been a youth leader at his Natchitoches church, has mentored at-risk middle school and high school students before and after their enrollment at NSU, and has been a Spanish tutor for teammates and other NSU student-athletes. Last spring, he helped with flood recovery around Natchitoches and Coushatta.

Among the causes he's been involved with are Special Olympics, National Night Out, Natchitoches Parish Kids Health Festival, Community Clean-up, and the local Boys & Girls Club. He's made dozens of school appearances, visited nursing homes, helped local schools and NSU move furniture, fed the homeless, and helped provide underprivileged youth with school supplies.

"It just came naturally to me. It felt good to give back to the community," said Thompson, who was involved in some community service activities back home when he was the Gatorade Player of the Year for Delaware at The Sanford School. "My favorite thing is to talk to the inner-city kids in Natchi-

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LEGENDS

Legends Dinner will be in Natchitoches May 6

The Sixth Annual Legends Celebration spotlighting great figures in Northwestern State athletic history is relocating to Natchitoches on Saturday, May 6.

The Legends Celebration will be staged at the Natchitoches Events Center after a VIP reception across Second Street at the Chateau St. Denis hotel. The lineup of NSU sports stars who will be saluted was recently announced on NSUDemons.com, where online registration is available.

Dr. Haley Taitano, NSU's associate athletic director, is coordinating the Demons Unlimited Foundation fundraiser. She

can be reached at blounth@nsula.edu or 318-357-4278.

With the shift down I-49 to Natchitoches from its original site in Bossier City and Shreveport, the Legends Celebration will not include a golf outing. The focal event remains the Legends Dinner, which includes a pre-dinner social hour and silent auction, the presentation of the annual Joe Delaney Distinguished Supporter Award, a live auction and a panel discussion with the Legends which always produces memorable and hilarious moments.

Five home games set for 2017 season

Five home Southland Conference contests, including the first two and three of the last five, combine with season-opening visits to Louisiana Tech and Grambling on Northwestern State's 2017 football schedule.

Director of Athletics Greg Burke and head coach Jay Thomas collaborated on the schedule, which has no road trip longer than four hours for the 2017 Demons, who return a projected 59 letterwinners including 36 who started at least once last fall.

It kicks off with a unique pairing, non-conference visits less than 90 miles away in Lincoln Parish against old rival Louisiana Tech on Sept. 2 and Southwestern Athletic Conference champion Grambling a week later.

NSU and Louisiana Tech first met in 1907 and most recently played in Ruston in 2014, with the Demons rallying for a 30-27 victory. The Demons and Grambling's Tigers – coached by former NSU assistant coach Broderick Fobbs, the HERO Sports FCS Coach of the Year in 2016 – collided for the first time in an historic 1974 matchup in Shreveport, more recently splitting a home-and-home series in 2008-09. Grambling will meet NSU in Natchitoches in 2018.

The nine-game Southland Conference slate kicks off in Turpin Stadium on Sept. 16 against Lamar. After an open date, in-state rival Southeastern Louisiana visits on Sept. 30.

Among the four conference road games, the longest trip is for a first-ever matchup against Houston Baptist. NSU will face in-state rivals Nicholls and McNeese on the road, along with a mid-October trip to defending Southland champion Sam Houston State.

The Demons' homecoming game is Oct. 21 against 2016 FCS playoff entry Central Arkansas. The other two home games are Nov. 4 (Abilene Christian) and Nov. 18 in the annual "Battle for Chief Caddo," the largest trophy in sports, with old rival Stephen F. Austin to wrap the regular season slate.

"Perhaps more so than has been the case for many years, the proximity of every opponent on the 2017 NSU football schedule makes it easier for Demon fans to attend every

game," said Burke. "There is a great deal of excitement over the fact that the two non-conference opponents - Louisiana Tech and Grambling - are both within an easy drive of the NSU campus.

"On top of that, the furthest Southland Conference away contest is but four hours from Natchitoches. It truly will be meaningful for the team to have great support from the Demon fan base while on the road," he said.

Thomas, who will be in his fifth season coaching the Demons, is excited about his 2017 team and its schedule.

"We'll play 11 quality Division I opponents and be challenged every week, which is great. I know we're going to have a veteran, quality team taking the field with tremendous determination," said Thomas, "and with this schedule, we'll have a big group of fans supporting us every time out."

2017 Northwestern State Demon Football Schedule

Sept. 2	at Louisiana Tech
Sept. 9	at Grambling
Sept. 16	*LAMAR, 6 p.m.
Sept. 23	open
Sept. 30	*SOUTHEASTERN LA., 6 p.m.
Oct. 7	at *Nicholls
Oct. 14	at *Sam Houston
Oct. 21	*CENTRAL ARKANSAS (Homecoming), 6 p.m.
Oct. 28	at *Houston Baptist
Nov. 4	*ABILENE CHRISTIAN, 6 p.m.
Nov. 11	at *McNeese
Nov. 18	*STEPHEN F. AUSTIN, 3 p.m.

* indicates Southland Conference games

Dates and kickoff times tentative, pending potential changes for TV. Road game kickoff times TBD.

Spring Sports reunions this season

Two spring sports reunions are upcoming in April. Conference championship Demon baseball teams from 1957, 1967 and 1997 will be the featured guests at Brown-Stroud Field April 21-23. All former track and field competitors and staff members are invited to gather April 28-29 as the annual Leon Johnson NSU Invitational meet is staged that Saturday at the Walter Ledet Track Complex.

All former Demon baseball players, coaches and staff members are invited to the alumni weekend April 21-23, which will spotlight the three conference champion teams. The registration fee of \$20 covers tickets to games Friday night, Saturday and Sunday, along with a pregame meal Saturday and a T-shirt. A special hotel rate is available at the Comfort Suites hotel at I-49. To RSVP and pay online, visit NSUDemons.com/baseballreunion17 online.

For information on the track and field reunion and to register, contact Taitano or assistant athletics director Mike Jacklich (318-357-4268, jacklichm@nsula.edu).

Former SID McDonald will be inducted into La. Sports Hall of Fame

NSU journalism graduate Dan McDonald ('74), a former Current Sauce editor who served from 1975-80 as sports information director for the Demons, is being inducted in the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in Natchitoches on Saturday, June 24.

McDonald is in the College Sports Information Directors Hall of Fame for his work at NSU and UL Lafayette. He became an award-winning sportswriter at the Lafayette Daily Advertiser and is now a broadcaster and freelance writer in Lafayette, and helps wife Mary Beth ('82) run McD Media, a public relations/marketing firm.

He is entering the Hall of Fame as a 2017 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award in Sports Journalism from the Louisiana Sports Writers Association. McDonald is among 11 inductees in the Class of 2017, headlined by golfer David Toms, football star Ed Reed, major league baseball's Juan Pierre and jockey Calvin Borel.

For participation opportunities, visit LaSportsHall.com. The four-year-old Hall of Fame Museum is at 800 Front Street in Natchitoches, at the traffic circle.



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toches, because that's my background back home. I know where they're at, and I tell them nothing is impossible, if you just stay focused and work hard, you can get anywhere in life."

With a quick smile, a soft-spoken but friendly personality, and great listening ability, Thompson quickly connects with all audiences, large to one.

"Sabri has been at the forefront of our NABC Stay In to Win program each time we've gone out to a school, making an impact on students' lives. Whether it's something with youth at churches or the Boys & Girls Club, events on campus, so many different things, Sabri is like sunshine, he's always there and warms you up," said McConathy. "He's a willing participant, a person who wants to be there. He has a great demeanor and makes you feel it's the most important thing he's doing."

Community service has been a key component of Demon basketball since McConathy arrived in March 1999. It's also a cornerstone value for the NSU Athletics Department, which has averaged over 5,000 hours of service annually in recent years.

"I'm so excited for him and his family, and his NSU Demon family, because this also speaks for all the Demon athletes we have at Northwestern," said McConathy.

"I'm very hopeful this says that we want great quality young men in our program, guys who are role models for others. Sabri is one of many we've had involved extensively in community service, and he's a shining example, a great representative. We're thankful that Sabri receives this award in part, representing all of our young men who have done so much to help others."

Thompson sees the recognition as a way to open doors for more good work.

"Maybe I can motivate some others to make good grades and help others. Hopefully this award helps me reach people in a different way, not just through athletics," he said. "It gives me better credentials. Kids can see that because I've worked hard and tried to be unselfish and giving, good things are happening, including this honor, and that's true in life, that if you do the right things and help others, you will reap benefits."

In the short-term, Thompson hopes it might earn him attention from scouts as he takes a shot at playing professionally after he graduates from NSU with honors in May.

He's in the midst of a dynamic senior season, averaging 17.5 points in Southland Conference play, ranking 15th nationally with his 44.2 percent 3-point aim. He's recently become the 30th player in school history to post 1,000 career points, and is fifth all-time at NSU in career 3-pointers made and 3-point aim.

Thompson is going full-throttle in the final weeks of his college playing days, looking ahead to life after NSU, whether or not basketball continues. One thing, he said, is certain.

"Whatever I'm going to do," said Thompson, "I'm going to work hard at it."

Guess Who



The naming of Mr. and Miss NSU is the highest honors that a university student can receive. Mr. and Miss NSU are chosen based on campus-wide election on the basis of service to the university, community, leadership, scholarship and character. Can you guess the names of Mr. and Miss NSU who appeared in the Potpourri in 1977?

Answers to Winter Guess Who:

Contestants who competed in the 1997 Lady of the Bracelet pageant were Kimberly Baird, Brandy Coburn, Aimee Lasseigne, Paige Campbell, Heather Ragsdale, LOB 1996 Farrah Reyna, Shelley Colvin, Rose Triggs and Lois Davis with 2006 LOB Jennifer Fox. Reyna also won evening gown, talent competition and People's Choice Award. Colvin was first runner-up and winner of the swimsuit competition. Ragsdale was second runner-up, Triggs was third and Campbell fourth. Lasseigne was Miss Congeniality.

Those who answered correctly were:

Kari Dennison Allen (1999), Haughton

Ashlee Crooks Hewitt (2001, 2010), Natchitoches

Looking Back



50 years ago, Feb. 15, 1967:

An early morning fire caused the complete destruction of Guardia Hall

Tragedy struck the Northwestern State campus in the early hours of Feb. 15, 1967 when Guardia Hall caught fire and was completely destroyed. Students were evacuated from dormitories near the blazing building. The loss of the building was disastrous but so was the destruction of the Williamson Museum and the Louisiana Studies Institute's photographic collection housed there.

In Memory

- 1944 – H.G. Hawthorne, Dec. 19, 2016, Temple, Texas
- 1945 – Marjorie Jane Ward, March 29, 2015, Lake Charles
- 1947 – Margaret Ellen Abington Sutton, Feb. 23, 2017, Natchitoches
- 1948 – Robert Manning Jr., Nov. 20, 2015, Waterproof
- 1948 – Kerlin Sutton, Jan. 17, 2017, Natchitoches
- 1950 – Orville Kellar Dick, Nov. 22, 2016, Birmingham, Alabama
- 1952 – Jean Clark, July 6, 2016, Monroe
- 1953 – Dorothy Mottesheard, Nov. 3, 2016, Zachary
- 1955 – Hubert Whatley, Sept. 25, 2015, Shreveport
- 1956 – George McConathy, Oct. 24, 2016, Gibsland
- 1960 – Jerry Wayne May, Jan. 17, 2017, Bethesda, Maryland
- 1961 – Robert William Powell, Oct. 14, 2016, Lafayette
- 1962 – Melvin Adolf Cern, June 30, 2016, St. Louis, Missouri
- 1962 – Bobby Joe Howell, Oct. 29, 2015, Lafayette
- 1963 – Violet Eversull, Jan. 28, 2017, Baton Rouge
- 1964 – James Harold Braley, Oct. 29, 2016, Tomball, Texas
- 1965 – Cynthia Fitzgerald Fitch, Jan. 17, 2017, Metairie
- 1967 – Betty Cheatwood Knotts, Oct. 29, 2016, Castor
- 1967 – Charles R. Smith Sr., May 27, 2016, Hammond
- 1967 – Johnia Inez Cherry Towry, Jan. 28, 2017, Mobile, Alabama
- 1969 – Sherman Doolittle, Jan. 3, 2017, Robeline
- 1969 – Dr. John Hall III, Feb. 13, 2017, Lexington, Kentucky
- 1970 – Brian Baker Holoubek, Jan. 7, 2017, Shreveport
- 1971 – Sherman Doolittle, Jan. 2, 2017, Robeline
- 1971 – George Thompson, July 13, 2016, Leesville
- 1972 – Shirley Downs Young, Jan. 8, 2016, Hillborough, North Carolina
- 1974 – Ray Buckner, May 27, 2016, Alexandria
- 1975 – Earl Rodney Lofton, December 22, 2016, Natchez
- 1977 – Ren Todtenbier, Jan. 12, 2017, Natchitoches
- 1984 – Steven Perry Whatley, March 23, 2016, Bossier City
- 1986 – Bradford Keith Bates, Aug. 5, 2016, Olla
- 1991 – Todd Huddleston, Feb. 5, 2017, Kenner
- 2000 – DeLana McLain Martinez, March 9, 2016, Mandeville
- Dr. Dwayne N. Kruse, November 22, 2016
- Nellie Clayton, Jan. 6, 2017, Haughton

Flavor of Louisiana promises cocktails, cuisine, music and more

The Northwestern State University Foundation will host Flavor of Louisiana, an event to showcase the talents of chefs from throughout the state with samplings of Louisiana seafood dishes, along with cocktails and entertainment.



Flavor of Louisiana, which will begin at 6 p.m. Friday, April 7 inside NSU's Wellness, Recreation and Activities Center, is a collaboration between NSU and the Louisiana Seafood Board in which guests can savor eclectic samplings of Louisiana's rich culinary tradition. Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser will be a featured special guest, along with 2017 inductees into the Long Purple Line, NSU's alumni hall of distinction, who will be honored earlier in the day.

Tickets to Flavor of Louisiana are \$65 per person or \$125 per couple. Sponsorships are available at three levels. Pelican Sponsorship (\$1,500) entitles guest to reserved seating for 8, media promotion, signage and priority parking. Magnolia Sponsorship (\$1,000) entitles guest to reserved seating for 8 and sponsor signage. Fleur de Lis Sponsorship (\$500) entitles guests to reserved seating for 4 and sponsor signage. For more information or to make reservations, visit northwesternalumni.com/fol.